



"You just can't help but smile when you're surrounded by sweets," said Sarah Eubanks!!



Above left to right: Sarah Eubanks and Catherine Gill, Chairman of the Holiday In The Park Bake Sale Booth. See pg. 8 for Article on Bake Sale.



Above: "The Set Up and Take Down Crew" for the Bake Sale Booth. Left to right: Catherine Gill, Doug McKee, Darryl Krogman, Richard Lewis, Deborah Gammon and Mike Peterson.

From The President



Dear LCHS Members & Friends,

HAPPY NEW YEAR as we welcome 2022. It was such an amazing ending to 2021 for LCHS with all the events held in the Historical District. Thanks to all who made the whole year exciting.

Looking forward to our Board meeting to plan another great year for LCHS. You can expect some new and exciting things happening in the near future. Stay tuned!!

Also, just a reminder for our members,- it's time to pay dues for 2022. You may go to "membership" on our website listed above, and pay your dues online,--or, a form is attached to send in with your check. Thank You again.

**FAITH AND SERVICE,
Doug McKee
281-338-1073**

Christmas in Old League City 2021 was... full of fun, costumed choir, vintage vehicles, winter WALKabouts, parade of patchwork, rope making round up, cornucopia of confections, deluge of docents, many melodious moments, and coming together of community. Thank you for celebrating the season with LCHS!



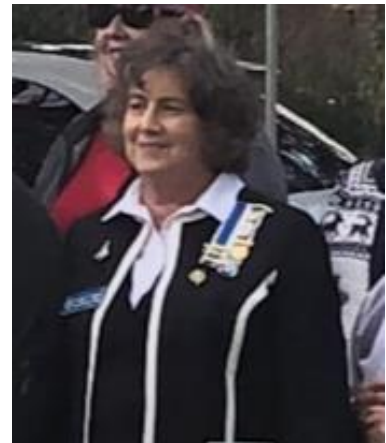


Left: LCHS member LCDR Joyce Zongrone, USN(Ret.) placed a wreath on the grave of Pvt. Oscar Juenger, US Army, World War I. Above: LCHS members LCDR Joyce Zongrone and Lt Col. Gareth Nenner, USAF (Ret) placing US Navy and POW wreaths.

Wreaths Across America 2021

The Sam Houston Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution held the annual Wreaths Ceremony at Fairview Cemetery on Sunday December 19. Chapter members, veterans and persons currently serving on active duty participated in the ceremony. LCHS members LCDR Joyce Zongrone and Lt Col. Gareth Nenner, USAD (Ret) placed the US Navy and POW Wreaths.

Wreaths were laid on the graves of veterans Frank Ellis and Oscar Juenger by LCHS and DAR member Deborah Gammon and LCDR Joyce Zongrone, USN (Ret.) Deborah Gammon was instrumental in obtaining VA headstones for Ellis and Juenger who died more than 55 years ago with no next of kin.



Deborah Gammon, LCHS Brd. Member and DAR member.

The Past is Present Around Clear Lake

By Joyce Zongrone

The past is ever present around Clear Lake. If you start down NASA Road 1 to the northeast, you can feel the rush of the future as you pass the Johnson Space Center, but you can almost feel the vestiges of the past. If you listen really hard, you might hear the sounds of yesteryear and see the ghosts of the early settlers coming back to overlook their beloved lands. With lanes of snarled traffic, it may be hard to imagine a two-lane gravel and shell road, once cutting across rich grazing lands and plentiful fig farms.

Glancing over your left shoulder, you can imagine how excited the residents were when, in December 1917, the first planes to fly over Houston, took off on their inaugural flight from the ***U.S. Army Flying Field***. Although those planes landed safely, by August 1918, this base recorded the most pilot fatalities of the 18 U.S. Army Air Service training bases in the United States. The Flying Field was later renamed Ellington Field in honor of U.S. Army 2nd LT Eric Ellington, killed during a training flight, in San Diego on November 24, 1913, three days before Thanksgiving. The twenty-four-year-old flight instructor began his career as a Navy pilot before transferring to the US Army Air Corps. He was one of the first U. S. servicemen to be killed in an airplane crash.

Further down the road is a haunting place where the restless souls of the Karankawas roam their burial grounds. Other souls, not so holy, may still be looking for the buried treasure of the infamous and legendary pirate Jean Laffite. Sometime in 1820, somewhere on ***the north shore of Clear Lake***, according to legend, the infamous and legendary Jean Laffite buried a half million gold coins, booty from a U.S. merchant ship he attacked in Matagorda Bay. Reportedly, a wooden chest was buried in the woods, a few hundred yards inland.

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(The Past is Present Around Clear Lake – continued.)

In 1837, in a busy saloon on Main Street in Houston, an old man claiming to be an ex-Lieutenant of Jean Laffite was bragging about how he helped bury the chest. Some bones, a few Spanish coins and a small snuff box were found in that general area by two fishermen in the 1840s.

Shortly after his hot and hasty departure from Galveston (Laffite burned his village to the ground when he left), one of his cohorts, Andrew Roach homesteaded in the area of the reported buried treasure, also close to the Karankawa burial grounds. That area is now **Taylor Lake Village**, named for Anson Taylor, a defender of the Alamo, whose three sons died there. The earliest information about farming what is now Armand Bayou, actually originated on Anson Taylor's farm on Taylor Lake and Taylor Bayou. Taylor was an associate of Laffite and sold the pirate his produce, firewood meat from wild game and cattle to Laffite's camp in Galveston. Roach, AKA Andres de la Roche and Andrew Rocchi, was born in Italy in 1794. He married Taylor's daughter Cecilia in 1824 and they had eight children. It was rumored he built her an ornate Italian Villa on Taylor Bayou, although no remains have ever been found. The Roach family eventually emigrated to Mexico and died there.

Today, the **Karankawa burial grounds** on the north shore of Clear Lake, are locked in watery graves due to subsidence. In the mid-1980s the tops of tombstones could still be seen.

The **Old Kemah Schoolhouse**, more than one hundred years old, once an art gallery owned by artist Evelyn Stebbins for 36 years, was home to a ghost. The artist once told me of her encounter with an evil entity who may have been one of Laffite's long-lost marauders seeking a final resting place or even a disgruntled rumrunner who got outfoxed by a fellow trader and has come back to seek revenge.

(Continued on next page.)

(The Past is Present Around Clear Lake – continued.)

Seabrook Shipyard, opened in 1938, produced six wooden subchasers and nine rescue boats for the U.S. Navy during World War II. One of its owners, Albert Fay, was appointed in 1969, by President Richard Nixon, to oversee the Panama Canal. Later, in 1976, Fay became Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago under President Gerald Ford.

As you travel westward from the intersection of Highway 146 and FM 518, on the south side of FM 518, you can view the area where, in the summer of 1924, an **outbreak of hoof and mouth disease** took the lives of most area livestock. Legend has it women brought flowers to the sight mourning their dead animals. Their livestock to them was just that, their stock of life. Without it and with losing it under such tragic circumstances, life remained pretty grim.

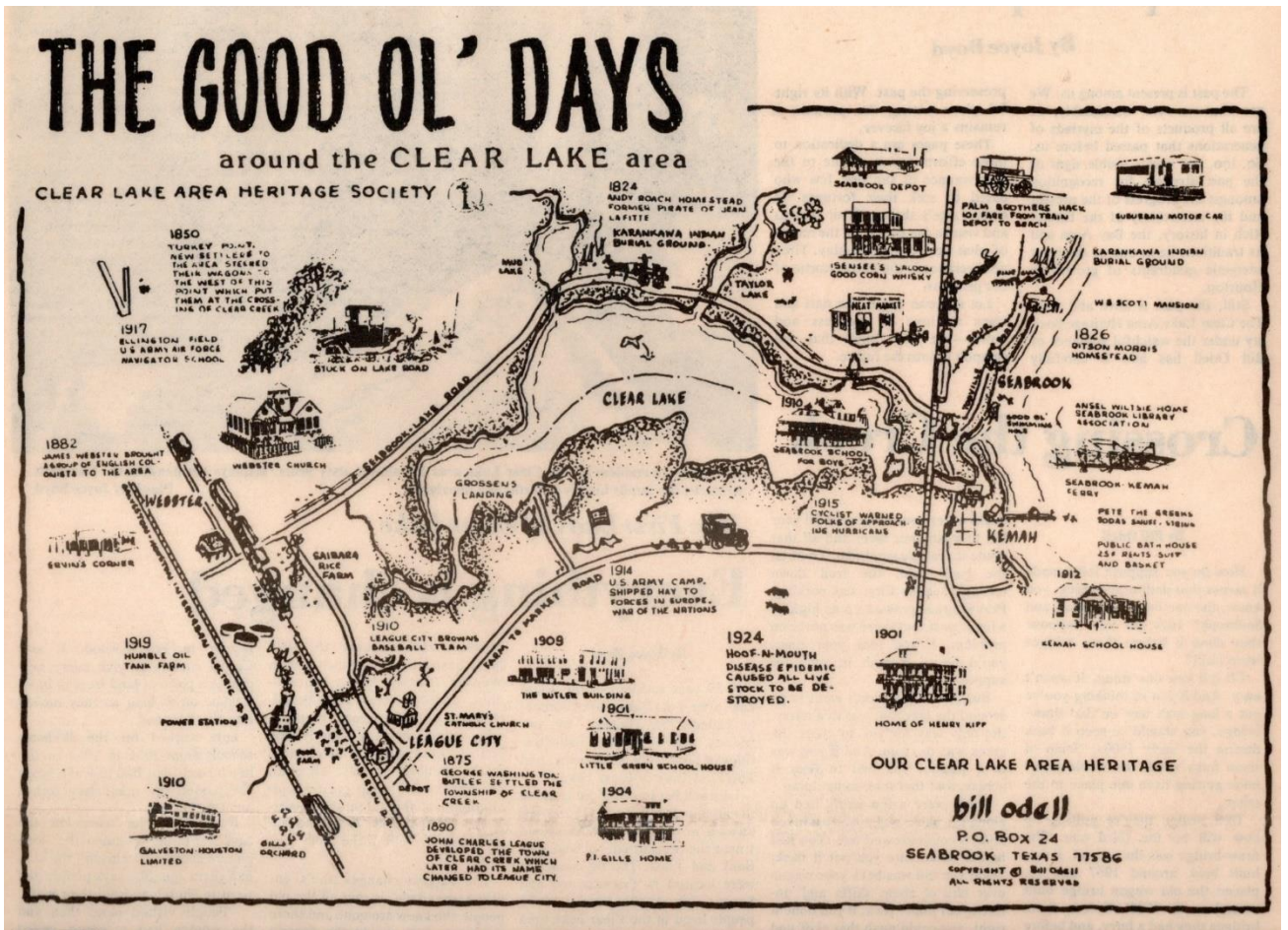
Also, on the southern edge of FM 528, near FM 270, was the spot where a **U.S. Army Camp** raised and shipped hay to the forces in Europe for the horses and mules during World War I, then called War of the Nations.

And then, of course, there was black gold. Oil was discovered in the **Webster Oilfield in** 1933, twenty-three years after pipelines were laid in the community in 1919.

While the treasures of the past may lay buried, who knows what may be unearthed in the future?

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This graphic drawing, "OUR CLEAR LAKE AREA HERITAGE," was given to Joyce Zongrone by local historian Bill Odell in 1984. William "Bill" Thomas Odell (1934-2016) founded the *Clear Lake Heritage Society* in 1982. After promoting the history of the Clear Lake area and its two prominent historical railways, the Galveston-Houston Electric Railway Company and the Texas City Terminal Railway, for 31 years, the Society dissolved in 2013. Bill served in the U.S. Army and later became a reporter and cartoonist for the Friendswood Journal, the Friendswood Reporter and The Citizen. He also authored Return to Clear Creek in 1978.



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Sarah Eubanks

LCHS Christmas Cookie Booth Holiday in the Park 2021

By Sarah Eubanks and Catherine Gill



**Catherine Gill, Chairman
Bake Sale Booth**

All things considered, helping with the Holiday in the Park LCCHS Cookie Booth this year was quite the eye-opener. I had no idea what a huge project this event is. It's not just "a bake sale." While I've helped bake in the past, this was my first booth to attend. Our Organizer for the event, Catherine Gill, adds, "I have helped before, but being the one in charge was really a bigger job than I had imagined."

I took the late afternoon/evening shift while my family staked out an ideal place to watch the Holiday Parade. I was a little apprehensive about even finding the booth because the Festival is always very popular. After a quick call to Catherine, I was very pleased to find we had a perfect location right by the caboose.

Next came another happy surprise: the sheer amount of Christmas Cheer of all of the submissions. There wasn't just a small sampling of cookies or muffins or random baked goods. It went way past that. There was a huge variety of these and then so much more. From brownies, to Little Debbie's, to Rice Krispie Treats, to butterscotch Grass Hoppers (new one for me!), and all of the flavors of the rainbow in between, and most of it home-baked. The baked breads went fast, muffins and cupcakes! Everything had to be wrapped. And then the baked goodies all needed a special sticker label saying so. With every one of these items representing volunteers who donated their time, talent, and money.

Speaking of money, everything at least in my opinion was priced right. We had one guest tell us they were glad to have something at the bazaar they could afford with their dollar. Even while the Parade was going on, there wasn't a lull in sales. I saw a lot of happy customers and a lot of sincere smiles, which is always good for the soul. Finally during take down all of these wonderful industrious volunteers showed up out of nowhere right on time and prepped the booth for the night quickly and patiently, much like Santa's tireless Elves.

For me this was a humbling experience, the sheer amount of support and generosity that LCCHS Volunteers graciously give, and all during the busiest time of year at that. A Big Thank You to everyone who helped support the 2021 Cookie Booth, from the bakers to the ground crew to the sellers and the organizers and everyone in between. Y'all didn't just make this possible, y'all made this a success.

Plans for Upcoming LCHS meetings in progress:

The LCHS is excited to share with all our members a series of very special family events that will begin in early 2022.

The League City Historical Society is working with the amazing Tucker Hart to offer Folk Music events with several of our local artists. The events will be outside on the property under the beautiful oak trees allowing family and friends to come together to share music, stories, and memories.



Please continue to visit the LCHS website at leaguecityhistory.org/ for updates as the new program is being finalized.
Thank you for the continued support of the LCHS.

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Below: More pictures from “Wreaths Across America.”



Darryl Krogman above and Michael Peterson to the right helping set wreaths at Wreaths Across America on Sunday, December 19.

Nutcracker Scavenger Hunt

It was a drizzly, overcast day but the very first Nutcracker Scavenger Hunt in the Historic District was a resounding success! The City of League City asked LCHS to partner in the scavenger hunt to correspond with the Nutcracker in the Park event that features the Bay Area Houston Ballet. Months of planning, collecting nutcrackers, locating potential shops and homes, contacting/coordinating nutcracker drop-offs, and developing clues was a collaborative effort between the City and LCHS. Over 1500 entries were recorded over the course of the day with participants scanning QR codes at each Nutcracker location. The winning family was randomly drawn at the tree lighting ceremony at League Park at the end of the day and presented with an amazing prize by the City. Thank you to all the participating homes and businesses, LCHS Chairman Katie Benoit Hake, Richard and Catharin Lewis, and Sarah and Ashley at the City of League City for making the Nutcracker Scavenger Hunt so memorable for 2021.

Below is just a glimpse at some the fun during the very first Nutcracker Scavenger Hunt.



**Special Thanks Katie
for all you do!**

**You are appreciated more
than you will ever know!**

Thank You!



Dues are Due for 2022!

Go to our website and pay online at leaguecityhistory.org or fill out the form on the last page of the newsletter and mail in your check.

We appreciate our members!
Thank you ahead of time for renewing your membership!!!

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**League City Historical Society
2021 Officers**

Doug McKee, President

Richard Lewis, Vice President

Amber Murphy, Secretary

Katie Benoit Hake, Treasurer

2021 Directors

Diana Dornak Director

Helen Hodges Director

Darryl Krogman Director

Catharin Lewis Director

Linda Michael Director

Michael Peterson Director

Susan Pierce Director

Ronnie Richards Director



If You Are Not A Member, We Are Hoping You Will Join!!

League City Historical Society

Thank you for being a member. The various types of memberships with the associated dues are listed below. To renew your membership or become a new member, select the membership level that is best for you, complete the form and mail to:

LCHS, PO Box 1642, League City Texas 77574

CATEGORY

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student/ Active Military | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (60 and over) | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Couple | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single (Individual) | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Patron | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership | \$400 |

BUSINESS CATEGORY

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Member | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Partner | \$200 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Leader | \$300 |

Please update your membership information here:

Name _____

(For family membership, please include names of family members)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email address: _____

- Check if your name, address or email has changed recently.
- Check if you would like to receive your newsletter, meeting minutes and/or meeting notices by email, to help save postage.
- Check if we may list your name and address in our membership directory. This publication will only be distributed to LCCHS members and will not be used on our website.

Please Note: Membership is for one year and covers you until January 2023.